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## ***Lexington Housing Partnership***

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### **Comments by Ken Kreutziger @ January 19 BLUPC Meeting**

When the Committee was at the Board of Selectmen's meeting on January 10, 2011, there was a statement by Norm Cohen that LexHAB has had success at building one or two units on scattered sites and that the Committee ought to talk with them about that. Yes, this is true they have had great success in this manner and have reduced their costs by working with Minuteman Tech doing their construction as an educational project.

But the Housing Partnership has been working with LexHAB on a new paradigm shift in the way affordable housing has been produced to date in Lexington. This involves a larger site such as Busa where it is possible to construct a small cluster of units, as small as two buildings with several units in each building. The main objectives of this new way of building are to be able to incorporate the principles of "Green Building" and to reduce the cost per unit substantially by accessing Federal tax credits and the use of Home Funds.

Before the Busa Land Use Proposal Committee's (BLUPC) first public session both Bill Hayes of LexHAB and Ken Kreutziger of the Lexington Housing Partnership talked about affordable housing. A subcommittee was formed to prepare a proposal to the BLUPC that includes several people from the Housing Partnership and Bill Kennedy from LexHAB. Ideas for this collaboration includes the expansion of the curriculum at Minuteman Tech using green building principles, the participation of Minuteman Tech students with a non-profit development group, and different options for management of long-term maintenance. Our proposal that has had the participation of LexHAB with the Housing Partnership, therefore presents a new paradigm for the development of affordable housing in Lexington. This new pattern illustrated by our proposal creates the possibility of greater efficiencies in construction of housing, reducing the cost per unit, and reducing the cost per unit for operation and maintenance as well.

We reiterate, several principles of green building design that are possible when building in the proposed manner at Busa rather than building one or two units on a lot. The opportunity is presented by the size of the property and the possibility of multiple units. It is achieved by using the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) principles in construction of a building and/or portion of a community designed and built using strategies intended to improve performance in metrics such as energy savings, CO2 emissions reduction, improved indoor environmental quality, and stewardship of resources including sensitivity to their impacts. These principles developed by the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) are intended to provide building owners and operators with framework for identifying construction, operations, and maintenance solutions. What are some of these solutions? One is reducing the ratio of exterior wall area to living area square footage. How is this achieved? By increasing the square footage enclosed by exterior walls and the roof. For affordable housing of limited square footage per unit this involves more units in one building, definitely having at least two stories, if not three, and increasing the R-value in the exterior walls and ceilings, which decreases costs in operations for heating and air conditioning. Any marginal additional costs for construction are paid back many fold in decreased costs on annual energy bills and reflected in substantially lower life-cycle costs of ownership, whether its town ownership for affordable housing or private ownership.